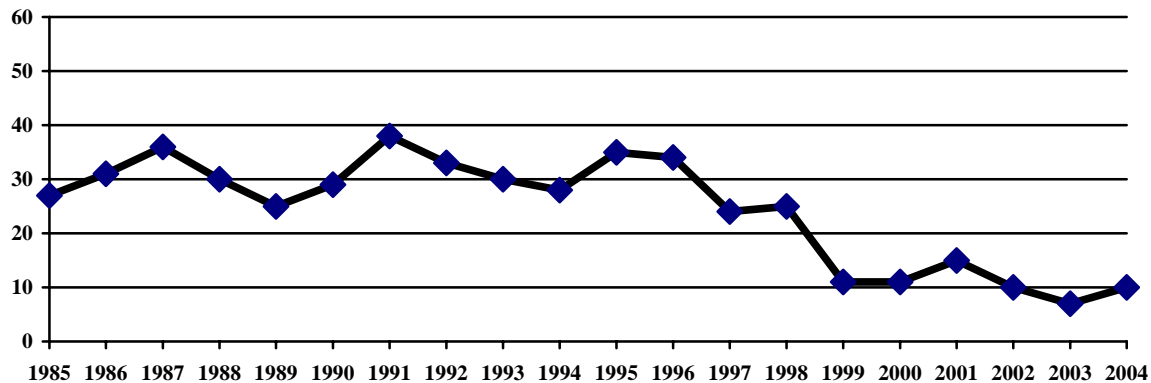


RAPE

, as defined by the Uniform Crime Reporting Program is the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will. Attempts to commit rape by force or threat of force, and assaults with the intent to commit rape, are also included; however, statutory rape (without force) and other sex offenses are excluded.

**Twenty Year Review:
Rape in Cambridge, 1985-2004**



Seven reported in 2003 • 10 reported in 2004

The Cambridge Police Department's Sexual Assault Unit reports that seven rapes and three attempted rapes were reported in Cambridge in 2004. This represents a 43% increase over 2003. In each of the 10 incidents, the victim knew her assailant. As of the publishing of this report, eight of the 10 cases have been cleared by arrest and two are under continuing investigation.

The seven incidents in 2003 represented the lowest number recorded by this department in the

past 25 years. Last year we hesitated to deem this decline a trend, however, given the tendency of rape statistics to fluctuate greatly from year to year (see

the graph above). The number of rapes that go unreported each year is uncertain; experts estimate that as much as

50% of domestic and acquaintance rapes are not reported by the victim.

	Acq.	Cont.	Blitz	Dom.	Total
Complete	6	0	1	0	7
Attempt	3	0	0	0	3
Total	9	0	1	0	10

CATEGORIES OF RAPE

- **Acquaintance Rapes** are non-domestic rapes committed by someone who knows the victim. They include rapes of co-workers, schoolmates, friends, and other acquaintances, including "date rapes." Nine of the 10 rapes reported in 2004 fell into this category.
- **Blitz Rapes** are rapes in which the suspect "comes out of nowhere." Usually, the attacker is a stranger but this is not necessarily the case. One such rape was reported in 2003 that occurred when a male suspect approached a female victim from behind and knocked her down. Thankfully, the victim's boyfriend scared the suspect off before he was able to commit the rape. In 2004, one blitz rape was reported in which the victim was attacked in her building by her neighbor, whom she knew.
- **Contact Rapes** are **stranger** rapes in which the suspect contacts the victim and tries to gain his/her confidence before assaulting him/her. Contact rapists typically pick up their victims in bars, lure them into their cars or houses, or otherwise try to coerce the victim into a situation in which they can begin their assault. No such incidents occurred in the City in 2004.

- **Domestic Rapes** involve rapes between spouses, romantic partners, and family members. No such incidents were reported to police in 2004.

Among all of the categorizations of rape, the “blitz” rape, or “street rape,” tends to provoke the most fear in the average citizen. Only two rapes reported between 2003 and 2004 fell into this category; in the majority of Cambridge incidents the rapes are perpetrated by an acquaintance.

Analysis of the “blitz” rapes reported in Cambridge over the past several years shows a trend of early morning (12:00 A.M. to 4:00 A.M.) weekend occurrences. In past years, such as in 1997, clusters of these stranger rapes have appeared around Central Square, despite extra patrol allocation. The most recent incident does not follow this trend, as the attack occurred early Monday morning in the victim’s apartment building.

2003* NATIONAL AND REGIONAL RAPE STATISTICS

The FBI’s Uniform Crime Report for 2003 reports that:

- Cities with a population between 50,000 and 99,999 residents reported a rate of **36 rapes per 100,000 persons**.
- Cities with a population of 100,000 to 249,999 reported a rate of **41 rapes per 100,000 persons**.

With a population of approximately 101,896, Cambridge’s rate (9.8) falls far below that of cities of comparable size.

In 2003, the FBI reported a decrease in the number of *incidents* of female forcible rape known to the police nationwide. The FBI estimates that the number of rapes in 2003 decreased by 1.9% from 2002’s estimated total. Between 1994 and 2003, the incidence of rape decreased 8.6%. Like the Cambridge Police Department, the FBI cautions that a significant portion of rapes go unrecorded, making the validity of the statistics uncertain.

Locally, cities with populations comparable to Cambridge reported an average of 38 rapes per 100,000 residents, which is significantly above Cambridge’s total. These cities include Brockton (46 per 100,000 population), Fall River (83 per 100,000 population), Lowell (43 per 100,000 population), Lynn (10 per 100,000 population), and Quincy (12 per 100,000 population).

**National and regional statistics for 2004 are not yet available.*

Please see page 139 for tips on how you can protect yourself against becoming a victim of rape, and how to handle the situation if you do find yourself in dangerous circumstances.